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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: IBOK SAYS DPA NOT WORKING, AU MUST TRANSITION TO UN

Classified By: Acting P/E Chief Michael Honigstein, Reason: Section 1.4
(b) and (d).

¶11. (C) SUMMARY. Special Envoy Andrew Natsios met African Union Ambassador Sam Ibok October 17 at the U.S.-funded Darfur Peace Agreement Implementation Office in Khartoum. Ibok asked for U.S. support for strengthening the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) while planning for a future UN re-hat. Ibok admitted the AU should reverse its position on working with non-signatories, and find a way to implement the Ceasefire Commission. He warned about government desperation over military losses leading to a humanitarian crisis and asked that the U.S. continue to engage the GNU on the political process, supporting SPLM proposals on Darfur and strengthening Darfurian groups. END SUMMARY.

Beef Up AMIS and Negotiate a Real Ceasefire

¶12. (C) Ibok admitted the Darfur Peace Agreement is not working, saying that its support base is limited and as hold-out groups fragment further the security situation is deteriorating. In response Ibok called again for an increase in AMIS troop strength. "The AU is not up to the task," he said, "it just doesn't have the capacity." In parallel to an increase in troop strength, Ibok called for political pressure on the GOS. "Unless the GOS wants this to work it won't," he said. "The AU alone can not change the attitude of the GOS; the limitations and obstructions it imposes." Ibok decried GOS statements supporting AMIS, pointing out that if the GOS wanted the AU to succeed, customs wouldn't be obstructing or denying entry to AU shipments in Port Sudan. Ibok said a VSAT and broadcasting equipment have been blocked for a year. This means that the GOS can cut AU communications at will.

¶13. (U) Ibok called for a real ceasefire in Darfur. He suggested that a targeted ceasefire in relatively stable areas, such as South Darfur, could create an island of stability. He said incentives for peace could counter the widely held belief that the DPA has brought greater chaos to Darfur. He also said AMIS should set priorities, including reallocating assets and narrowing its focus to protecting IDP camps still targeted by militants. He argued that where AMIS has stepped up its presence near IDP camps, attacks have decreased. When asked by Natsios about a ceasefire timeframe, Ibok agreed it should be limited to five or six months initially.

Bring Non-Signatories Back to the Table

¶14. (C) Ibok stated, "the AU must reverse itself," arguing that the Ceasefire Commission (CFC) is not working, and

non-signatories should be brought back to the CFC. "You can't negotiate a ceasefire without all the involved parties present," he said. Ibok also noted that as a result of cutting communication with non-signatory militias, AU forces' access to rebel-controlled territory was minimal. "The AU played into the government's hands by agreeing with the GOS and SLM/Minni to lock out non-signatories," Ibok said.

¶15. (U) Ibok argued that most non-signatories want to participate in the CFC except for the two main spoilers: the National Redemption Front (NRF) which hasn't clarified its position, and the JEM, which would join, not on the basis of the DPA but on basis of the N'Djamena agreement. Ibok noted that to reduce their profile, non-signatory representation could be at the sector level as opposed to the HQ level.

¶16. (U) As a first step to increasing non-signatory representation Ibok suggested that the issue be raised at the Joint Commission (JC) at the end of the month. He said that not only are many non-signatory representatives still in El Fasher, but that many members of the JC agree with bringing non-signatories back to the negotiating table. A JC decision would be multilateral and couldn't be as easily spun as a choice imposed by the AU or GOS. Ibok admitted that the GOS is opposed to non-signatory representation but pointed out that they were just one vote on the commission.

¶17. (U) In response to queries on European efforts to convene a non-signatory conference, Ibok said he had told EU representatives that, "big conferences are an absolute waste of time." He said "We have taken people all over the world for no reason and no result. The rebels will gladly take the money, and more will rise in their place to demand recognition and support." Ibok asked that the U.S. back Salva Kiir and SPLM initiatives on Darfur. He suggested that Salva Kiir push an effort to address the concerns of hold-out groups, perhaps through an addendum or annex to the DPA.

¶18. (C) Ibok said the GOS is pushing an agreement for Darfur similar to the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement recently signed in Asmara. He said Maghzoub al Khalifa told him, "Look, we found an African solution to African problems in four months, you took two years. We did it without the US, UN, EU and your western friends." Ibok said while the international community argued about non-signatory conferences, the GOS was active paying off militants, and these financial rewards mean that "everyone wants to come to Khartoum and sign an agreement."

GOS Desperation vs. International Determination

¶19. (C) Ibok argued that recent military defeats for the SAF in North Darfur could lead to a humanitarian catastrophe if the GOS retaliates against civilian populations. In response SE Natsios emphasized the growing Darfur lobby in Washington, and the determination that if there are further massacres in Darfur the U.S. will respond strongly. Ibok recognized the impatience of the international community for change in Darfur, but cautioned that the solution "can't be military."

¶10. (C) Ibok promoted constructive engagement with all parties, but noted that the majority of Darfurian groups need better organization. "We need interlocutors to work with and these groups aren't yet in the position to provide that," he said, noting that SLM Minni Minawi particularly needs structure and support. "The governors and commanders come to see Khalifa, not Minni Minawi," he said. "Minni is losing support, he needs to get back to Darfur and work with other Darfurian leaders on the ground."

¶11. (U) Ibok also called for focus on the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA). He said that international donors have to get the TDRA started and create a real political structure. Recognizing the current sensitivities towards allocating positions, Ibok suggested beginning with bureaucratic infrastructure, offices and technical support.

¶12. (C) Ibok praised President Bush's engagement with African and Arab leaders, and the resulting increase in voices criticizing Sudan's actions in Darfur. He noted that it would be constructive to shift the media focus from "Bashir vs. President Bush." Ibok related the recent visit of the Nigerian and Senegalese FMs who met with Bashir and offered to work together with the GOS on Darfur. According to Ibok, the Nigerian and Senegalese FM's stated openly, "although troops came to Darfur under AU auspices they will leave under UN auspices."

¶13. (C) SE Natsios noted that small steps have not been effective in influencing GOS behavior; he asked Ibok's position on a possible embargo on Sudanese oil exports. Ibok noted that any measures taken need to be credible. He pointed out that the NCP is isolated within the government on their Darfur position, and it would be useful to strengthen the other coalition partners.

Create a Credible, Less Extreme UN Discussion

¶14. (C) In discussing a future UN re-hat, Ibok called for pressuring the UN while cautioning that the GOS uses the UN debate as a platform for "scare tactics and extreme rhetoric." While avoiding this trap, he felt a credible discussion was needed on the nature and composition of a UN mission. At the same time he noted that certain clauses of UN resolution 1706, such as remodeling the entire police and judiciary, will continue to be untenable to the GOS as written, and should be sidelined.

¶15. (C) Ibok was dismissive of UNSRG Jan Pronk's optimism that UN observers would be soon deployed to augment AMIS in Darfur. Ibok thought that despite GOS public acceptance of deploying advisors, the GOS would delay negotiations on the Status of Forces Agreement as long as possible. On his part, Ibok said the AU is willing to accept UN assistance, and was confident that all administrative details will be resolved. SE Natsios flagged the power vacuum likely to occur at the UN with the SYG's departure, and warned that this could negatively affect the UN's current engagement with the GOS.

¶16. (U) SE Natsios cleared this message.
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